

The Council on Aviation Accreditation

***Industry and Education
Working Together
to Advance Aviation!***



Guide for School Counselors and Students

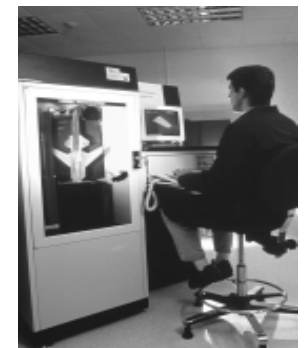
The New Aviation Career Path

Has a student ever asked you what he/she needs to do to work in the civilian aviation industry? Were you able to provide an answer? In the past, many career counselors, lacking alternative resources, have recommended military duty. This is an indirect solution at best, and poses potential obstacles. Students may find that it is easy to enlist in the armed forces but difficult to get into a aerospace program. The fact is that the direct career path to a successful civilian aviation job is through collegiate aviation programs.



Aviation is a \$600 billion industry that accounts for ten percent of the gross national product. Aerospace organizations are looking for new ways to encourage interest in aviation and communicate their job prerequisites to the public. Trends in military downsizing and predicted shortages of aerospace professionals are forcing organizations to consider new sources of job candidates. Because the best aviation positions usually require some background and experience, employers who need pilots, aviation maintenance technicians, airport managers, air traffic controllers, and other aerospace professionals must communicate their needs and help establish some standardization for aviation education programs.

In a 1997 Congressional report titled *Taking Flight: Education and Training for Aviation Careers*, the National Academy of Sciences determined that collegiate aviation programs should be able to supply a sufficient number of job applicants for the future. It stated that those graduates will be adequately qualified, provided that the Council on Aviation Accreditation (CAA) continues to grow and set the standards for these programs.



What Is the Council on Aviation Accreditation?

The Council on Aviation Accreditation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that meets twice a year and sets standards for all aerospace programs taught in colleges and schools around the United States. Designed by aerospace educators and the FAA, it judges the quality of aviation education courses. Programs that meet CAA standards are accredited for a five-year period.

Members of the CAA are educators, customers, employees, regulators, manufacturers, research firms, and advocates. Ultimately, they are the people who teach and hire aerospace industry professionals.

Become an Expert in Aviation Career Counseling

What does this mean to you as a career counselor?

First, encourage your students with aerospace interests to apply to colleges with CAA-accredited aviation programs. They will be getting an excellent college education as well as a nationally recognized aviation curricula. CAA programs have a direct link with all corners of the aerospace community and frequently offer benefits, such as internships.



Second, consider becoming an sustaining member of the CAA. You will have the opportunity to work with representatives from business, advocacy groups, government, and education. You will be able to find out, firsthand, what kind of knowledge and experience your students need for both college and employment. You also will be able to track the constant changes in the industry.

The Pulse of the Industry

Through the CAA, leaders from every facet of the aviation industry come together to discuss the elements of today's successful aerospace program. Teams of experts evaluate college and university aerospace programs to make sure that they adhere to rigorous standards and reflect changes in today's technology. This information provides schools with the knowledge they need to continually build their curricula.

This community partnership forms a conduit working to promote interest in the aviation profession, attract the brightest and most capable students, educate them by applying the highest standards, and route them to successful aerospace careers. In educational disciplines like engineering, many companies will not hire people who do not have degrees from accredited programs. It is a matter of time before this will be the case in the aerospace industry. Last year, there were more than 26,000 students in aerospace programs in this country alone.

David North, Editor-In-Chief of *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, says, "All aerospace companies and airlines should take a much more active role in molding their potential pool of job applicants... Activism is far better than hoping the person walking through the door has the skills and attitude you are seeking."

What Is Accreditation?

Accreditation is a status that educational programs earn, much like an individual earns a certificate or license. Accreditation is a system for recognizing educational institutions and affiliated professional programs that achieve and maintain a level of performance and quality, which entitles them to the confidence of the educational community and the public they serve.

In the United States, this recognition is provided through non-governmental, voluntary institutions, or professional associations, which establish criteria for accreditation, arrange site visits, conduct evaluations, and publicly acknowledge programs that meet the criteria. Although the CAA is incorporated as an independent, specialized, accrediting association, this organization is the out-

growth of a collaborative effort between the FAA and the University Aviation Association.

Accreditation stimulates aviation program excellence and self-improvement through uniform educational quality standards. It increases credibility and integrity of aerospace programs throughout the aerospace community.

The Benefits of CAA Membership

- ☐ *Participate in the improvement of America's aviation education infrastructure*
 - ☐ *Network with representatives from every aspect of the aviation industry and develop important new contacts*
 - ☐ *Through CAA contacts, provide and collect valuable feedback*
 - ☐ *Build your resume and enhance your marketability*
 - ☐ *Gain greater industry insight and develop an expertise in aviation career planning*
 - ☐ *Offer your students a clear path to their career goals*
 - ☐ *Justify future resources for your career counseling programs*
 - ☐ *Improve opportunities for scholarships*
 - ☐ *Build parental confidence*
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A CAA Success Story

Christian Smith exemplifies the benefits of an accredited aviation education. Christian attended a CAA accredited university. As part of his curriculum, he worked for one semester as an intern for United Airlines for college credit.



Graduating from college, Christian took a job doing some corporate flying in a KingAir. A year later, he was hired by United and became a B-737 first officer. Two years later, he upgraded to the A-320 and two years after that, completed training to fly the B-777. He has even appeared on the cover of *Air Line Pilot* magazine.

Christian's success is due to his hard work and diligence, but one cannot overlook the opportunities he gained from attending an accredited college. In selecting Christian for both an internship and, ultimately, employment, United Airlines knew that he came from a challenging, technologically-current school. United could draw this conclusion because Christian graduated from a CAA accredited program. In addition, representatives from both United and the school work together to help set the standards all CAA accredited programs are required to meet.

At a recent CAA meeting, J.D. Whitlatch, former vice president of Standards and Training for United Airlines, discussed company/educator linkages and flight internships. In the first ten years of the program, United selected more than 800 interns, 200 of whom were hired as flight officers. In addition to the comprehensive internship experience, United has offered opportunities for faculty, and some have obtained type ratings. Whitlatch noted that in order for an institution to participate in the internship program, the organization must have at least one program accredited by CAA.

The future employees of the airlines, FAA, DOT, aircraft manufacturers, NTSB, NASA, airport authorities, and the military are all in CAA programs today. There will be more and more success stories like Christian's because industry and education are working together to ensure that tomorrow's aviation professionals have the knowledge and skills they need. The mechanism for this success is the CAA.

CAA Membership Categories

You can be a member of this dynamic organization. The four categories of CAA membership are:

- Corporate Members are nationally recognized aviation corporations, industry organizations, governmental organizations, or aviation education organizations. (Annual Dues: \$1,800)
- Trade Association Members include any recognized trade association which is not a governmental entity or employee/labor union or association and which represents or renders service to the aviation industry and which has a special expertise in aviation. (Annual Dues: \$500)
- Educator Members include any regionally or nationally accredited college or university having an aviation program or offering courses in aviation at the associate or baccalaureate level. (Annual Dues: \$600)
- Sustaining Members include any organization, corporation, foundation, institution, practitioner, or individual having an interest in aviation and aviation education that desires to contribute knowledge or support to the CAA, but does not qualify as a Corporate or Trade Association Member. There are two classifications of Sustaining Members: Individual (Annual Dues: \$40) and Organization* (Annual Dues: \$350).

Corporate, Educator and Trade Association members are voting members; Sustaining members are non-voting members.

*Organizations or institutions not eligible for accreditation



Here Is What the Aviation Industry Says About the CAA



“CAA endorsements give us an important, credible, and useful qualitative means of evaluating a candidate’s educational experience. As demand for talented aviation professionals increases, we in the industry will become more and more dependent on CAA’s role in maintaining and improving the educational process.”

Robert Buley, Northwest Airlines Captain

“The CAA helps strengthen collegiate aviation in two ways. The accreditation process itself gives administrators and faculty in collegiate aviation programs the opportunity to reflect on what we do and how we do it and thereby ensure we continuously improve. It also serves to firmly connect our schools and curriculum with the industry’s needs so our students will get the best preparation for success. The CAA serves everyone’s needs: the colleges, the students, and industry.”



Herbert Armstrong, Assistant Dean, Dowling College



“In the next 10-12 years, the scheduled U.S. airlines expect to carry more than 1 billion passengers a year. To meet this demand, the airline industry will need a well prepared and highly motivated work force. We will look to the accredited colleges, universities, and other aviation training institutions to provide these individuals.”

Captain Al Prest, Vice President, Operations, Air Transport Association of America



“Pratt & Whitney hires many of its aviation professionals from CAA-approved schools . . . The CAA, in cooperation with industry, guides the design of its approved schools’ curriculum so that it matches company needs and thereby contributes directly to higher productivity and profitability.”

Richard Wellman, Pratt & Whitney



“What I see among the members of the CAA is an incredible amount of collegiate and corporate dedication to ensuring the quality of accredited programs . . . This process gives college administrators, employers, students, and parents the assurance that programs accredited by the CAA have been scrutinized by experts in the field and have met or exceeded high standards of performance.”

Carmen Goodman, CAA Public-At-Large Trustee



“There are few causes more worthy than to educate young men and women to eventually assume our august responsibilities in this extremely exacting, ever growing air transportation industry.”

Jack McNamara, former CAA President

“I can easily say that completing a CAA Accreditation Self Study enhances the entire academic process and serves to further motivate our students. It gives the college or university an opportunity to greatly improve services and focus on the improvement of teaching and learning systems.”

Bob Finkelstein, North Shore Community College

Become A Member!

Get involved in your community—the aviation community! Become a member of the CAA and be a part of tomorrow’s aerospace legacy! To find out more about the CAA and what you can do, contact us at:

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